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FOREWORD: DEMOCRACY AND PRIVATE EDUCATION

Dan W. Dodson

✓ What is the role of private education in modern America? At the college and university level there is little disagreement on the answer to this question. Private colleges have taken their places along with public and church related institutions as the complementary triadic "American way."

In nursery and kindergarten education the pattern is less clear. Kindergarten schooling seems to be more nearly a public education function, while nursery schools are largely non-public.

Historically, at the elementary and secondary levels, public education did not take hold in America until the 19th Century. In this era the west was developed and public education became popular and overshadowed the private throughout the country. The weakness (in numbers) of both the private and the parochial schools, led most Americans to see their "common schools" as the great commonly shared heritage of all children, free and universal for all youth.

The rationale for the private schools today, must be evaluated in terms of the purpose for which the schools exist and the purposes behind their patronage. Undoubtedly many parents support such schools because they seek a sanctuary for their children from the heterogeneous classes of public schools. Some private schools perhaps are poor replicas of good public schools, but exist because of such parental motivation. Other such private schools exist for unique programs not provided in public education, e.g., atypical education.

There are other private schools whose loss would be a grievous blow to all education. These are the schools with well defined purposes and resources with which to forge designs for new educational challenges.

The modern private elementary or secondary institution, to justify its existence in a democratic society, must fulfill at least partially the following roles:

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1. The experimental role. Public education is usually less free to experiment than is the private school. In fact many private schools owe their origins to the need to validate new designs of method or organization. How to keep experimental is one of the biggest challenges such schools face.

2. The yardstick role. There is constant need for yardsticks against which to measure public education. The inherent danger of monopoly is no less acute in education than in industry. The public has no way of knowing how "good" their schools are unless there are other schools against which to compare.

3. The creative role. So much of education is an art that there is great danger of stultification if the educative process becomes bogged by formal, traditional procedures. Too many educational systems are too "muscle bound" by their own rituals to ever allow creativeness to be fostered. Moral and spiritual values, heterogeneous vs. homogeneous groups, and camping as an extension of school program, may represent such areas.

4. The leadership role. It is not enough to experiment, to be a yardstick, or to forge creative designs. Unless these make some impact upon main streams of education a major contribution is lost. Here it is not enough merely to demonstrate, there must be leverage and skill to pass the insights gained on to the profession. In this regard the professional team must involve other people whose influence and support in the community can be used to interpret the validated methods and philosophy to the broader community. This has been, perhaps, the greatest failure of most experiments—it is in some respects the strength of the school whose program is here described.

No such private educational program can ever service all the children. Not the least measure of its value is its impact on main streams of public education.

In the years ahead as America grapples with the great issues of teacher shortage, the non-conforming child, the increasingly heterogeneous community, the problem of segregated groupings, pressures to conformity—we need all the diverse approaches possible to create new values and experiment with new designs.

To this end the staff of the Ethical Culture Schools was asked to present this number. We believe this discussion will contribute to the understanding of private education in a democracy. The editors are grateful to Mrs. Wagner, her staff, and Laetitia Manchester, her Editorial Assistant, for their effort.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION—THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL MAKES ITS CONTRIBUTION

Victoria Wagner

The primary responsibility of the public schools of our country is to assure an education for every child. This is a magnificent concept which has been put into effect with remarkable energy and devotion. In fact, the original goal has been steadily extended to include not only elementary education for all, but secondary as well, and now training beyond the high school level. We Americans wish also to educate children of nursery age, the handicapped, the gifted, as well as the adults in our communities.

An undertaking of this magnitude has certain inherent problems, due to its very size and scope. Its organization may become too unwieldy to respond quickly and sensitively to creative thinking. Its numbers tend to interfere with that informal and direct communication of ideas between teachers and the searching minds of students which has been the essence of learning since the days of Socrates.

Every resource of our society, whether publicly or independently supported, is required to meet the overwhelming demands of our country's educational program. The first of these needs is for a generally higher level of excellence in education. In America, because of our zeal in educating all of our people, quantity has often been substituted for quality to the detriment of true democratic education. Our free society calls upon its citizens to make judgments on an increasingly wide variety of subjects. The difficulty of coping with new situations increases with the rapidly expanding body of knowledge. Education is now therefore of greater importance than ever before, and only education of the highest quality will answer the purpose. It would be serious indeed if in a world so closely related, problems affecting all of us should be decided by the uninformed or the irresponsible.

How then may we attain such an education for all our children? First, by stimulating and sustaining a love of learning, intellectual curiosity and independent search for knowledge with the accompanying joy and satisfaction of discovery. Secondly, by insuring a mastery of the fundamental skills of learning so that this pursuit of knowledge may be satisfied without the discouragement and frustration of failure or dull mediocrity. These learning skills are more meaningful and effective when the content and activities of the school engage all the child's aptitudes and interests. The articles in this issue are intended

to suggest various ways in which educational experience may be thus enriched, as well as to stress some aspects of a school program which have a special sociological significance.

Accompanying the American cherished ideal of universal education is a commitment inherent in the pioneering spirit, which pushes beyond the settled frontiers to find better means of achieving our goals. Today every community is re-examining its educational program and seeking new insight as well as practical suggestions wherever they may be found. The independent school has a special function to perform by contributing the results of its research and experience to the main stream of public education. By its very nature an independent school has the freedom and flexibility to try new ideas and discover better ways of meeting children's needs. Because of this fortunate freedom it also has an obligation to share its findings through every means at its command, in order to assure for all the children of our country an education of greater depth and significance.

Now Director of the Ethical Culture Schools of New York City, Mrs. Wagner has been associated with the Schools as teacher and administrator since 1929. Her publications include: *Spiritual Values in Elementary Education* and *Responsibility Can Be Fun*.

EXPERIMENTATION IN A SCHOOL

V. T. Thayer

Private schools have not always served as conscious instruments of social progress. Not infrequently, indeed, they have been established and maintained for the express purpose of equipping young people with the values of a retreating social order, and methods of thinking appropriate to yesterday rather than tomorrow. A striking illustration is that of the southern states which are in the process of re-writing their constitutions to permit abolishing public schools and subsidizing attendance at private schools as a means of evading the Supreme Court mandates on segregation.

Fortunately, however, the main stream of educational development has not been diverted nor turned back by such impediments to progress. On the contrary, it has been continually strengthened and deepened by the inflow of ideas from many tributary sources. And among the most important of these have been those independent schools which have pioneered in the use of new materials and new approaches. The educational experimentation that has been most fruitful has been carried on by schools which succeed in retaining

their enthusiasm for discovery together with a capacity for self-criticism and re-evaluation.

Among these the Ethical Culture Schools have held a position of leadership since their establishment in 1878 as a free kindergarten out of which grew the Workingman's School. Impressed by the sterile academic work of public schools of the time, the faculty of this school introduced arts and crafts as instruments for vitalizing intellectual work as well as for enriching the child's experience through creative activity. As Felix Adler, founder of the Schools, observed, "The hand is educated by the mind, the mind by the hand."

Another long-term "experiment" which many schools have found productive concerns the integration of the parent body into the life of the school as a whole. This is now achieved in varying degrees by different schools. But long before parent-teacher associations were generally recognized, the professional staff of the Ethical Culture Schools enlisted the cooperation of parents in order to further their understanding of the work of the Schools and of the needs of children at various stages in their development. Today, not only are child study and parent education now officially considered a responsibility of the Schools, but parents as well as faculty, alumni and representatives of the Society for Ethical Culture sit upon the governing board and help to formulate policy.

The faculty shares with that of other schools a concern for influences which affect or fail to affect young people out of school. Believing that the urban home and the urban community fail to provide young people with the opportunities to participate responsibly in home and community activities, which, in a simpler environment, once fostered emotional and social maturity and self-respect, the Schools have employed various means for involving students in community service. With the younger children, these services are simple, direct, personal, and limited to the school environment. With the older students, carefully organized programs include cooperative relations with the social and civic agencies such as hospitals, day nurseries, social settlements.

The decade 1930-1940 afforded the Ethical Culture Schools an opportunity to take part on a much wider scale in curriculum reorganization on the secondary-school level. The depression, with its apparently permanent contraction of the American economy, was disastrous in its effects upon youth. For a time, indeed, college and technical school graduates of this period commonly referred to themselves as a lost generation. So serious was the situation that the national government inaugurated a unique work and training program through the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Adminis-

tration. At the same time, studies of the economic and social status of youth, particularly those of the American Youth Commission, cast doubt upon the relevance and validity of much in conventional school and college education. This led to the appointment of two commissions which functioned under the general auspices of the Progressive Education Association: The Commission on Relations of School and College (often referred to as the Eight-Year Experiment), and the Commission on the Secondary School Curriculum. The first encouraged experimentation with the curriculum on the part of some thirty or more schools and school systems, public and private, with a view to the eventual modification of requirements for admission to college. The second attempted to determine fundamental principles of curriculum organization in the secondary school in the light of a first-hand study of adolescents and their needs in schools and colleges and in youth-serving agencies outside the conventional patterns of education. Members of the Fieldston School faculty were active in the work of both commissions, a number contributing fruitfully to publications that have influenced subsequent developments on both school and college levels.

The normal tendency of the faculty and administration of the Schools is to subject their work to critical examination and evaluation, to test the effectiveness of teaching methods against real educational aims. Like good teachers everywhere, our faculty has two primary concerns: one, to search out new ways of realizing accepted values and re-appraise these values in the light of new needs; two, to examine critically methods and procedures that have become conventional and to inquire concerning their appropriateness under present conditions—to probe for an answer to the question, "Have we, perhaps, gone too far in directions once novel and promising, but now commonplace despite their failure to realize their original purposes?"

It is this kind of self-criticism and questioning that underlies the experimentation which an independent school can most fruitfully conduct. This spirit and these questions are reflected in the articles which follow.

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The following two articles relate to curriculum areas of great importance in today's technological society. The first involves what is frequently referred to as "the hard core of the physical sciences," namely, mathematics. It is certainly the core though it need not be as hard and grim as we have often made it for children by our uninspired, unimaginative approach. Not only do we need an awakening in the teaching of mathematics, but a fresh outlook on science as well. Students need awareness of the physical world about them as well as the people who inhabit it. Their lives are enriched and sensitized by a growing appreciation of life and living things. Their emotional maturity is developed by an assumption of some responsibility for the protection and preservation of life.

FIRST NUMBER CONCEPTS: CORNERSTONES OF MATHEMATICS

Costa J. Leodas

Whenever we deal with things mathematically we are concerned with their quantity, that is with their number, size, value, or amount. Whether we visualize "three chairs" or whether we imagine the length of "three yards," it is the "three-ness" that is our real concern. Philosophically the things or forms in themselves can never be the true object of mathematics, but only their quantity.

The first requisite for good teaching in mathematics is the establishment of correct and clear quantitative concepts. These, of course, should be taught in a manner whereby the joy of learning is communicated from adult to child, to preserve and foster the child's curiosity about the world in which he lives. But our best efforts to provide an educational climate of quality are wasted unless the child is helped to derive correct concepts. The task of the teacher of young children is to create situations wherein the child will focus on understandable experience, and will abstract an idea, like that of "three-ness," from various familiar examples. Some will reach the concept quickly, some will require longer exposure. The symbol is of use only after the concept is clear. In elementary arithmetic teaching a great many different structural aids are now being used to *remind* the child of a concept which he already has. They can never *give* him a concept, and they should be used with this caution.

In the same manner as the four- or five-year-old examines numbers initially, the middle-grade child looks at whole things broken into equal parts and gradually draws off the concept of one half, one third, one fourth. He will examine a blackboard panel composed of

three equal pieces of slate, an hour broken up into sixty minutes, a yard broken into three feet. He must be clear about the idea before he is introduced to the symbol which represents the idea. Space does not permit one to do more than mention the ways in which imaginative teachers are helping children to reach a correct and clear concept of a fraction. Fractional discs of wood and plastic, drawings of geometric forms on the blackboard, linear representation on board and on paper, and concrete experience in handling the common containers of liquid, dry, and linear measure are all useful. For the child who fills a quart milk bottle with water and pours the contents into a gallon jug, repeating the process until the large container is filled, the question "What part of a gallon is the quart?" leads naturally to the meaning of the relationship $1/4$. Do we have the right to expose a child to pictures of these objects in a textbook until he has had this real experience in a classroom?

The next important idea that follows the establishment of the meaning of a fraction comes from the exploration of several fractions common in the experience of ten- and eleven-year-old children. If you divide a square, a rectangle, a chocolate bar or a pie into four equal pieces and take two of them, symbolize it in the language of mathematics as $2/4$, you have the same portion or value of the whole as if you broke it into two equal parts and took one of them, or $1/2$. The keystone concept emerges—the notion that there are many different *forms* of the same *value*, and conversely, that we may retain the value of a fraction and change it to different forms. The relationship between the number of pieces and the size of those pieces is ready to be explored. Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of fractions become a jumble of rules (all arbitrary and pointless) unless this basic idea is understood and can be handled comfortably.

The child who knows that the value of $1/2$ of any whole thing can be talked about as a certain number of fourths, as three sixths, five tenths, and so on—that child is ready to handle the relationships of fractions imposed by the fundamental operations. He or she should, incidentally, recognize the clumsiness of dealing with $3/6$ or $4/8$, and relate them to the expression of the *same value* which involves the largest possible pieces, and that most easily dealt with— $1/2$.

It is certainly beyond the scope of this article to dwell on the content of the mathematics curriculum, but one thought comes to mind. Ideas that can be discovered at some leisure, with room for the kind of search that is interesting and illuminating, are worth inclusion in the program for any age. I am reminded of the humorous stories that concern the division of fractions. How many of us think immediately of a mechanical rule which applies to this process, and

which "works"? "Invert the second fraction and multiply" or "invert the fraction on the side of the room where the door is, and multiply"! How many of us use division of fractions in reaching the solution of a practical problem in life? If the child cannot be taught to handle this in direct relation to the two ideas involved—the meaning of a fraction, and the process of division—why teach it? Would it not be wiser to find out why these ideas cannot be grasped by the majority of students, than to resort to mechanical and therefore dangerous techniques? Why feel obliged to teach the process in the sixth grade because fifth graders are not ready to deal with the concepts involved? Why teach it at all at the elementary level if we ourselves are not certain of avoiding mechanical treatment? This is only one of a great many elements of the program that need regular re-examination. . . .

The teaching of mathematics would seem to comprise these three principal objectives. First, to guide the child to correct and clear quantitative concepts. Secondly, to show him how these concepts are represented by the symbols of the science. In the case of young children it is the Arabic symbols for numbers that are at hand, and we have a special responsibility for teaching the young child to appreciate and understand the pattern and the sense of the marvelous Arabic system. Thirdly, it is of particular importance in this day and age that we teach children to deal with the concepts and the language of mathematics with flexibility of approach. The direction in which science has developed in the last twenty-five years, the increasing dependence upon mathematics as a separate functioning discipline which deals with the problems of the physical sciences, has placed a new premium on this third element. We need to continually examine at all levels of education, and certainly at the base—the elementary level—whether we are seeking the path so clearly described by Alfred North Whitehead in *The Aims of Education* some twenty-five years ago, when he said:

"Let the main ideas which are introduced into a child's education be few and important, and let them be thrown into every combination possible. The child should make them his own, and should understand their application here and now in the circumstances of his actual life. From the very beginning of his education, the child should experience the joy of discovery. The discovery which he has to make is that general ideas give an understanding of that stream of events which pours through his life, which is his life."

Formerly Director of the Green Acres School in Bethesda, Maryland, Mr. Leodas has been Principal of the Fieldston Lower School since 1954 and also directs the Fieldston School Day Camp.

CONSERVATION—A WAY TO SOCIAL VALUES IN A SCIENTIFIC WORLD

Martha E. Munzer

Thoughtful people these days are talking about conservation. Small wonder, when our world population of over two and a half billion is expected, at its present rate of expansion—short of world conflagration—to double by the end of the century. In the United States we are multiplying at such rate that our present 170 million may be well over 200 million in a scant eighteen years!

Slowly Americans are beginning to realize that there are limits to the natural resources with which we have been so abundantly endowed. Even if we could solve this problem for ourselves, what about the teeming, hungry lands in the rest of the world?

Too few of us at present even know what conservation means. The definition most generally accepted is: "*the wise use and intelligent management of our natural resources, ensuring the greatest good to the greatest number in the long run.*" Natural resources include: *Renewables*—soil, water, plant and animal life; *Non-renewables*—minerals, chemicals; *Energy*—present and future sources: fossil fuels, water power, nuclear and solar energy. To these categories we should add another: *Human Resources*—individuals with inventive and productive capacity who furnish us our *Unknown or Undiscovered Resources*—resources which are continually being developed, for they are the unpredictable product of the inventive brain.

The schools of the nation must share the responsibility for finding long-range answers to universal questions about the use of resources. From kindergarten through college, schools are a great mine of talent in which we must expect to find most of the scientists and technicians whose work will contribute to those answers. In this search one of our most valuable aids is the imaginative teaching of conservation. As young people come to see how a knowledge of physics, chemistry, biology or geology, for example, affects our ability to control our common destiny on this planet, their feeling for these subjects takes on a vivid, personal meaning. Thus conservation study may become not only an end in itself, a response to a pressing need, but also a means to that end—an effective tool which we can use to strike the rich lode of unrevealed capacities from which will come our sorely needed scientists of the future.

Meanwhile we must also rely on schools to provide all students with an understanding of conservation needs and techniques as part of their equipment for intelligent, responsible action. To understand the impact of science on our lives today is a necessary part of edu-

cation. If we are not to become its victims, we must be its masters. Science is important not only for its emphasis on facts as a basis for conclusions, its insistence on an unprejudiced approach to truth and knowledge, but also in its social aspects.

That this is already being recognized to some extent is shown by the fact that courses of study and textbooks in high-school and elementary science throughout the country now include conservation concepts at all levels. Science teachers consider conservation problems sufficiently important to have incorporated them in every course.

Where a true concern for conservation exists in a school, it may well come to pervade the whole curriculum. On the elementary school level, this can come about quite naturally. The most valuable result of a child's early experiences in science, for example, is the development of a genuine liking for it and a desire to find out more. Curiosity, the natural asset of every child, can be turned to good account as he explores the beauty and wonder of the world, and searches for answers to all sorts of questions about the earth, its creatures and their relationships. Especially valuable in this respect are group activities and services. In one school, for instance, third-graders install an aquarium in any classroom or office that requests it, and service it daily. They clean it, feed the fish and remove the sick ones for hospitalization. In the process the pupils learn how a siphon works, how a fish breathes, the weight of water in relation to its liquid measure. They develop responsibility for the job. But even more, they learn to love and respect the living objects of their care. Caring for animals, growing their own plants—even in a laboratory—give city children first-hand knowledge of life processes, of the inter-dependence of living organisms. What better basis for comprehending the importance of conservation?

The problem is quite different at the high-school level, where vertical barriers between subjects and an overcrowded curriculum create special problems. However, outstanding schools and outstanding teachers have done remarkable work. Saving the eroded soil around the school or in one's own back yard; protecting not only the lone tree that grows in Brooklyn but also discovering in addition how an asphalt jungle may, through planning, be made into a place for healthy growing;—these are firsthand contacts with the realities of environment. Becoming aware, through community experiences, of the dual role of law and education in such crucial problems as water and air pollution, coming to grips with the problems created by our skyrocketing population;—these are preparations for adulthood. Rubbing shoulders with some of the people who devote their lives to various phases of conservation; having a chance to do some element-

ary but genuine research; glimpsing career possibilities;—all these experiences and many others need to become familiar to young people, varied and multiplied a thousandfold.

Because conservation puts science to work so constructively and directly in the service of society, it forms a strong cartilage through which to integrate the teaching of science and social studies. The story of our westward expansion with its waste of natural resources, the past and present dependence of our economy on coal, oil, gas and water power, the ways in which our people's lives have been shaped by flood and drought, are but a few examples to show how easily a conservation course can be related to the study of history and geography, economics or sociology. Where a real concern for conservation exists in a school, it may well come to pervade the whole curriculum. If it is truly taught and learned, this will be revealed in the mature attitude and enlightened response of young people to all aspects of conservation problems with which they come in contact.

All this is a tall order for our teachers, the vast majority of whom, though wanting to teach conservation, are just beginning to develop techniques and procedures.

In helping to evolve a program for conservation studies, the independent school may play a significant part. Because of smaller than average classes combined with more flexible curriculum, a conservation program may progress more rapidly in an independent school, especially one which is conscious of a recurring need for revising and adding to its program. Any school which is adept at finding ways to stimulate its students' intellectual curiosity will meet this challenge most successfully.

Conservation is, in essence, a way of life, a manner of looking at ourselves and our relationship to our "habitat," the earth, to the creatures who share it with us and to those who come after us. Once we truly understand that we are part of the web of life, that our welfare and very existence depend on the health of the natural world around us, we may also be wise enough to do our part to keep it healthy. This will include thought for the future, manifested not in senseless hoarding but in sensible planning and management.

Only thus can there be a harvest to reap and to share. These words of an ancient Chinese proverb are worth pondering: "All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today."

A graduate of M. I. T. in chemical engineering, Mrs. Munzer taught chemistry for twenty-five years at the Fieldston School, where she also had charge of field trips, summer jobs and community services. Now on the staff of the Conservation Foundation, she is writing a book, *Teaching Science Through Conservation*.

Liberation of the mind and spirit comes through the arts. The relation between the arts and the academic areas of the curriculum should be an organic one in which each is essential to the highest functioning of the other. This can be achieved only when the relations of the faculty members to each other are centered upon the experiences of the children rather than in any vested interest in given areas of subject matter or skill.

A LETTER TO A SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER

Edward Glannon

DEAR RUTH:

I am going to write an article and I need your help. This article should be about an art teacher's work and its relation to the social studies. It's a question of how my work relates to yours.

If I may use you as a target and write at you, it will make me think a little straighter. I never could fool you where teaching is concerned and, with you, it concerns just about everything.

I have been asked to answer the question, "Should we have art for art's sake or should art be the handmaiden of the social studies?" Of course, I would reject both of these choices, but it is a choice I've never had to make.

The notion of art for art's sake is too narrow and too confining to permit a man to do a decent job. A healthy art was always strong enough to use its forces in support of the ideas it found worthy. And it always did this without any sense of loss. Only the weakest and most anemic concepts of art must protect themselves from life's contaminations. As to being a handmaiden, that seems a little comic. Art is too old and too big and too masculine and too courageous ever to be much of a handmaiden for anyone or anything.

It seems to me that a curious and futile dualism has persisted in education. I am speaking of that notion that there is a difference in quality between those studies which are purely verbal and those which require physical action and can be embodied in actual physical objects. Neither of these can be less or more than the other. They are one and the same thing. The education of a human being should be, itself, a work of art. It has a body as well as a soul. Burn the body of any work of art and where is the soul?

What is social studies but the story of man—his past and his potential. Art is a physical part of man's story but is there any better proof or record of his soul?

You and I both know that the only part of our teaching work

which has any ultimate value is that which actually becomes part of a human being. It has to grow into a child like his own cells and become part of his thinking. It only matters if he can think with it and bring it to bear on all his future learning and all his decisions.

We have tried hard to build a continuing sequence of concepts into each child—and we have always tried to give him a decent chance to affect the reality around him in the light of his new learning. This I think is the essential clue to our relationship. I have invented many ways to make it possible for children to invent ways to embody and to realize the concepts you were building up.

When your children were Indians, we worked within the limitations of the Indian. We learned the sources of the Indian materials and we used the products of nature as they came. We built a lot of strength within these simple and rather rigid patterns.

Then they became Vikings. I changed when they did. It was time for them to learn that man can reshape nature's materials according to his needs and purposes. He could curve planks and melt metals and so cross oceans. The wonderful virility of Viking design was easy to teach them because they knew the Indian concept so well that they could think with it to move beyond. Once they understood how the Vikings could turn a ship upside down on stone walls to make a fortress, it wasn't hard to teach them the meaning of a castle. And when they got that strongly in them and understood the nature of its closed and world-resistant form, we were ready for a look at the open, defenseless design of a cathedral. After that most of them should know enough to discover the United Nations Building for themselves.

Naturally, I want to be in on it when they study Colonial America. For me, the integrity of design in so many of those early American implements is just as important an historical fact as the Whiskey Rebellion. I want the child to know this kind of creative integrity. Whether he gets it under the heading of Social Studies or Art or Science is of no particular concern to me—just so he gets it.

I want to see these youngsters make a creative, constructive approach to reality on every front. I want them to think of art, in its biggest sense, as a way of approaching anything.

I want them to think of art as a way of applying form to human action, as a way of making form and content one. I accept entirely the idea stated by Goethe when he said, "Content without form is chaos. Form without content is a spinning of cobwebs."

The richer the content the greater are the possibilities for form. The content of your social studies teaching is deep and rich and whole.

It's at the very center of their learning lives. It's just what I need to do my work.

As I see it, Ruth, my job has two phases. Both of them are vital and are often in competition with each other. I must work with both hands and sometimes I must resist with one hand the job that I am doing with the other.

With one hand I am trying hard to help make these children into social beings. I am trying to teach them the common languages and customs and standards of the society in which they live.

With the other hand, I am trying to save their individual souls. I am trying to protect them from being completely swallowed up in the patterns of society. This is an essential part of my job and I can't relate it directly to social studies or any other program in the school. It has to do with maintaining a sensitive relationship over a period of years with each individual child in the school. It is the effort to foster and encourage a certain inwardness, a certain harmony which the human individual can find only within himself. It is an effort to preserve the unique poetry of childhood so that at least its spirit may survive and some day be a part of a living woman or man.

It's an effort to preserve that sense of wonder, that feeling for spiritual adventure. It's an effort to coax out and to foster the creative possibilities in each young person. It's an effort to preserve the unique and precious qualities of the individual life against all the inroads and the pressures of a mass-production, mass-communication world.

Working here with say, a third-grade class, is like standing in a patch of wild flowers. We know that they will grow up and to grow up means to be transplanted into something like a formal garden. Each child is unique now, but soon he will be an adolescent and will be desperately anxious to join the human race. They will be all too anxious to take on the codes and conventions of society. After all, man is a social being.

The trick now is to strengthen and encourage the young wild flower, give it faith in its uniqueness so that it will be able to survive the socializing process, hoping that it will retain something of its wildness, something of its native flavor, something of its individual soul.

I feel a little foolish even saying this to you. You are their teacher. You know the need as well as I do—and you are just as anxious for the same result.

On the other hand, we know that they are going to live in an organized society and we know that they are going to influence or even reshape that society pretty much according to the way that they

interpret history, the story of man's past and his potential.

Each new generation must re-interpret history for itself. No teacher can control the way in which the next generation is going to interpret history.

What can we do about it? I think our biggest influence is that we can teach them how to gather the evidence on which they will base their decisions. We can introduce them to stronger, deeper, more meaningful sources of evidence. We can teach them how to evaluate evidence. In other words, we do help to create their standard of judgment.

The more profound and the more humane the sources they explore, the better will be their decisions. I believe strongly in the power of art at its highest level to help them in evaluating and judging human history. I want them to be aware of man as the creative creature which he is. I try to inject artistic concepts into the study of history wherever I can.

Because your social-studies program treats of people as whole human beings, I must support it. If you were only memorizing dates and battle sites, you would not need me.

I want all these children to know how to paint and build and carve. I want all of that—but I want more. The functioning of art in society at the highest level hinges on man's sense of history and his sense of human destiny. It requires the discernment and the highly developed sense of values on the part of many people so that they will accurately distinguish and readily absorb and apply ideas and concepts offered by the best creative minds of their own time. That dimension of insight which can see beyond average, that's what makes art a vital force.

We have worked together many years. I have not been your hand-maiden any more than you've been mine. When teachers become entrenched along the lines of subject matter, children pay the bill. I am grateful to you because you could always focus your concern upon a certain group of youngsters. You wanted them to have what they needed and get it where they could. That left me free to do the same. We didn't do all that we wanted to, but we did the very best we could. Many children are better off because we worked together. What else matters?

Thanks,

Eddie

Mr. Giannon is a painter who has been associated with the Fieldston and Fieldston Lower Schools since 1937. He has had several years' experience with every age level from high school seniors down to second grade.

So much emphasis in recent years has been placed upon examination of our academic procedures that the school's role in developing social awareness has been neglected. Yet there is concern about lack of consideration, behavior problems and delinquency. Although the fundamental attitudes of children are established by their homes, much can be done by a sensitive and resourceful teacher to supplement and reinforce the efforts of parents. In school, the child develops relationships which are of value to him throughout life.

Parents can play a role also by making an important contribution within the school setting. In this critical period when enrolments are increasing more rapidly than the supply of teachers, we should not overlook a talented source of assistance in our parents who might function as "auxiliary educators."

SOCIAL AWARENESS THROUGH EDUCATION

Helga R. Mortenson

The development of social awareness based fundamentally on consideration for others is an important function of education, basic to the philosophy of the Ethical Culture Schools. We begin the process with very young children who learn through class activities to become considerate of classmates and teachers. They learn to take turns, to share toys and mid-morning crackers, to play cooperatively, to help their teachers and their group with jobs like watering plants, caring for animals and putting things away. Later, they learn to help outside the classroom—delivering messages, for example. Our third grade supplies other classes with plants, fish and animals and is responsible for their care. In the fifth and sixth grades children work in the library, supply room, or "lost and found." They get out a school newspaper; they help with pre-school children.

Services such as these are not enough, however. Even before children learn to read, stories they hear may include folk tales, myths, fairy tales and legends which illustrate clearly good and bad human behavior: such stories as that of "The Fisherman and His Wife," "Prometheus," "Damon and Pythias," the chapter in Homer's *Odyssey* in which Odysseus experiences the most beautiful hospitality at the court of King Alcinous. The teacher's comments or questions serve to emphasize the constructive side of the stories and leave with the children the knowledge of how people can solve human

problems. This is one of the most important techniques which our Ethics Department uses in its work.

Small classes and many parent conferences give the teacher an opportunity to know each child in her class very well. Because of this the teacher is able to help the child, in turn, to understand and respect not only those children who are "like" him but also the "un-like" ones—Indian, Negro, Chinese or Japanese—children of different races or religions who attend our Schools.

Thus, social awareness develops naturally in the classroom, where the child, throughout the year, learns in many small ways to practice consideration for others. For example, children as well as adults interrupt at times, but when a child breaks into class discussion constantly he must be made aware of the habit and helped to overcome it. Learning how to enter a room quietly if one is late, how to conduct oneself on an errand to another classroom, are details which also contribute to a child's social awareness, as does the opportunity to express thanks to assembly speakers or entertainers. When a group of children is giving a play and something goes wrong, such as a picture falling off a wall, the audience may laugh. When the class returns to its room the teacher may point out that it was funny to see the picture fall, but courtesy and consideration for the actors' feelings demand that the audience control itself.

Discipline gains meaning when based on the need to respect other children's rights. Thus, the teacher may ask each child to be considerate of his classmates by not creating disturbances such as sharpening pencils or disposing of waste paper when the class is about to start. Sharing a school lunch with their pupils gives teachers another opportunity for a practical demonstration of consideration. The cumulative effect of these daily examples gives children an imaginative approach to the broader problems which confront them in their studies and in the outside world.

When our students reach the upper elementary grades, two from each class are elected to the Student Council where they consider the interests of the whole school and, by reporting back to their classes, help to make the older children conscious that they belong to a group larger than their respective classes.

As the child grows to be a more social being through the practice of daily living, he also widens his knowledge of people through the social studies. At seven or eight he begins to be curious about the world beyond his ken. He learns more about people who live today in distant places and about those who lived long ago. Through class discussions in which the teacher emphasizes human relations and values, the pupil comes to understand more fully the constructive ways of solving problems.

When children stay long enough with people they are studying to identify themselves creatively with them through their arts and literature, they really learn something from their way of living. If in a study of the Middle Ages the teacher emphasizes the life of all the people—not only that of kings, nobles and knights, but of townspeople, serfs and monks as well—and the relationship of one to the other, there will be aroused in the children an awareness of the injustice to the serfs, the independence developed by the townspeople and the kindness shown by the monastic order. The following poem by a fifth-grade boy shows this awareness.

A GLIMPSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Knights, squires, pages,
Echoes of the Middle Ages.

Perched high above the rocks,
The castle with flying pennants.

A damoselle with golden locks
Awaits the princely errant.

A man strapped to a plow
In meadow edges.

This is a view, if it pleases you, of the Middle Ages.

H. S.

In our Schools when we study Indians, we make the student aware that there are two sides to this question by letting him learn to see the white man through the Indian's eyes. He may write an original story or poem like the following in which he puts himself in the place of the Indian:

AN INDIAN'S THOUGHTS

Shall I submit to the white man's way
And work, gathering corn and hay,
Or shall I fight for my wild life?
Great Spirit, shall I use my knife?

O Great Spirit, what do you advise
As I cannot call a man more wise?
Shall I go out and fight tonight
Or do what *they* declare the right?

E. C.

Studying about the slaves in our south always elicits a genuine feeling of sympathy and understanding for the Negroes on the part of older elementary-school children who are themselves beginning to be aware of their own need for more personal freedom. This feeling carries through to today's integration question and to the struggle for freedom of peoples or countries anywhere in the world. This in turn leads to an interest in the United Nations and the work of the Trusteeship Council in supporting freedom everywhere.

Unless, however, this knowledge and interest at every age is tied to reality, and the feelings and sympathies aroused in the child are expressed in some concrete way, his social awareness will not be sharpened. So, as in many other schools, our classes participate on their own level in such enterprises as "Friendship Among Children." They collect food for the local settlement house, raise money for UNICEF, for Hungarian relief, for children on Welfare Island and in India. As an important part of their curriculum our pupils have corresponded and exchanged presents and information with schools in Holland, Germany and England, enriching their educational experience through an increased understanding of human problems here and abroad.

It is through experiences like these, we believe, that children develop social awareness and consciousness that will make them not only sensitive to the great human needs in the world, but willing and able to do something about them.

Miss Mortenson teaches a sixth-grade class in the Midtown Ethical Culture School. She has worked intensively over a period of years with nine-, ten- and eleven-year-old children.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN A MODERN SCHOOL

William C. Swallow, Jr.

Good education is built on a broad base which must include the widest possible understanding, support, and participation by its constituent community. The level of parent participation is one very significant yardstick by which we may measure the quality of education which a school offers. To the degree that it fails to recognize the importance of working cooperatively with parents, a school in all probability fails to understand the child as a total human being. When educators discount parents, they do so to the detriment of both themselves and the children whom they serve. From the home the child receives his first and most basic learnings—be they social, emotional, or intellectual. Depending upon the quality of these, the school will find it easy or difficult to build upon and supplement them.

During his early years, and as he continues to grow, the most important adults in the child's life are his parents and his teachers, and the two influences are blended, not separate, in his consciousness. Therefore it is especially important that these adults, to be most effective, work together on behalf of the child. Just as conflict between parents can inhibit or misdirect a child's growth toward full maturity, so a lack of understanding between school and home will have the same undesirable results. Teachers and parents must, if in their respective areas they are to deal effectively with children, have faith and confidence in them and in each other.

It is not easy nor is it a small thing to be a good parent or a good teacher. Neither should be regarded as the competitor of the other, and yet, traditionally, feelings of rivalry and tendencies of one to blame the other have existed. Such feelings are held to a minimum in school situations where the lines of communication are kept open. The good teacher knows that parents are neither ignorant nor uninterested, that they have a stake and a responsibility in education, and that they want most desperately to understand the problems and needs of their children. Modern parents are not only far better educated than were their forebears, but are also aware of the need to re-examine their family role in a changing culture. Informed parents respect a good teacher as a professional who through special training and experience has achieved considerable insight into the handling and growth needs of children, as one who has acquired a sound degree of familiarity with the findings of other professional disciplines concerned with child growth, group

living and family relationships. Thus there is a logical community of interest upon which to build a true working partnership which will seek to find sound answers rather than to place blame.

While the integration of home and school is a two-way process, it is the school which must take the initiative. Parents must know by word and deed that they are wanted and needed because they have much to contribute. The school must provide a variety of opportunities for working together in a friendly setting. The air of receptivity within the school must be genuine, pervasive and constant. Parent participation is not something which a good school regards as a desirable "extra" but as a basic necessity. It will not survive as an attitude imposed upon a school or as something to be tried occasionally, but must become an integral part of the educational philosophy of administrators, teachers and parents.

The cornerstone of this whole partnership is the personal conference between parent and teacher, between adults who approach each other in respect and in a spirit of having much to learn as well as something to share. Practical problems may, of course, seem to stand in the way. Certainly teachers must be given the time to prepare for and hold these conferences, which may mean that the teacher's load must be lightened, through parents' help or some other means. Conferences should be leisurely to allow time for getting acquainted and for a full interchange of ideas. They should be regularly scheduled at least twice a year and preferably more often. This will take careful planning, but we know from many years of experience at the Ethical Culture Schools that it can be done.

Our Parents and Teachers Association, the first ever to be formed, may illustrate how this typically American kind of organization can serve a school community. It has never ceased to be a vital force since its creation more than sixty years ago. An integral part of our total educational program, it serves as a link between school and home and as a catalytic agent to stimulate and coördinate parent participation wherever needed. It is impossible to imagine our Schools without the P & T.

Each year the Association offers a series of meetings which give an opportunity for the "in-service" education of both parents and teachers. Parents devote themselves whole-heartedly to many interesting and necessary school tasks which serve to enrich parent-child as well as parent-school relationships. While sharing some of the educational experiences of their children, parents are able at the same time to supplement and enrich the school program and lighten the burden of the professional staff.

Some jobs are occasional or fairly routine in nature, while others

require a sustained and near-professional level of contribution. Parents assist in the school or parent-teacher library, on the playgrounds, on class trips, or in the lunchrooms; they serve as visitors' guides or as hostesses at meetings; act as occasional vocational advisors to older students; work with police and traffic authorities on safety problems, or with the School Medical Department on health programs such as polio immunization; help to organize special programs such as book fairs and annual festivals; or prepare school mailings. One group publishes suggestions for parent-child vacation activities around New York; one maintains a file of summer opportunities such as camps, trips, and work experiences; another runs an exchange for used books and outgrown athletic equipment; still another edits the monthly parent-alumni newspaper, which plays such an important part in interpreting the Schools' activities and philosophy.

There are many opportunities for the study of educational problems. For example, research must often be done as background for articles, pamphlets, or brochures required for general information, parent or teacher education, or other use. This may involve classroom observation and interviewing, or making written or photographic records of important aspects of the school program. Parents have been active, too, in a study of student social attitudes involving personal and group values as well as desirable standards and goals in relation to informal social life at various age levels.

Another function which parents may assume is helping a school to fulfill its community responsibilities by serving as representatives to educational and community organizations or by working actively in local service organizations. Parents in many schools take appropriate steps to support or oppose legislation or to promote civic improvements in which education has a stake. From working in the interests of their own children, they often go on to work for the development of better conditions for children everywhere—one of the finest and most far-reaching results of working cooperatively with parents.

Administrative problems, too, are often shared by parents. Our P & T Association is represented on our Board of Governors and its committees, and the majority of Board members are present or past parents. Often parents offer the benefits of their professional experience as consultants in such areas as law, finance, real estate, publishing, psychology, and sociology.

Financial support for education is achieved most effectively by parents who are both interested and intelligently informed. Working through their parent-teacher organization, the school board, and

various communications media, many public and private school groups have been highly effective in helping to increase faculty salaries, attract and hold good teachers, modernize school buildings, and improve the curriculum. Independent schools, more and more dependent upon fund raising in order to balance the budget, are relying increasingly on parents for this purpose and finding that they can do an amazingly effective job provided they really understand and believe in what the school is attempting to do.

In our own schools, for instance, parents and alumni take responsibility for providing funds which help make it possible to continue the high ratio of scholarships which we believe essential to the implementation of our basic educational philosophy. They also raise money to help underwrite our development program. Volunteer groups lend valuable assistance in the planning stages of various projects and continue to be active once the activities are underway. Some serve with teachers on committees devoted to developing new programs in such areas as teacher education, textbook writing and audio-visual teaching aids.

These are some of the ways in which a school may realize the fruits of working together with parents. From shared love for children can come a great power, the purpose of which is to find more and better ways to help young people become responsible citizens. Felix Adler, who founded the Ethical Culture Schools seventy-eight years ago, said, "We invite mothers and fathers to enroll themselves as auxiliary educators on the school staff. . . . The home and school should interpenetrate each other. The task of education should not be simply shifted by parents on to the school. They have a special function of their own *within* the school." Dr. Adler's words continue to be true, not only for us, but also for schools everywhere.

Mr. Swallow has had a long connection with independent and public schools, as teacher and as administrator. Formerly Principal of the Midtown Ethical Culture School, he is now Assistant to the Director of the three Ethical Culture Schools of New York City.

It is not necessary to accept mediocrity in education for the average student any more than for the "gifted." But education of high quality is to be achieved only by recognizing that it is, after all, an art.

QUALITY IN EDUCATION

Spencer Brown

The question of quantity in education is so pressing that it would be understandable, though not sensible, for us to forget quality altogether. The great American experiment of trying to educate everybody has ended in a triumph that now demands far greater experiments in trying to educate more of everybody further. We have succeeded in taking practically everybody through elementary school; we now set ourselves the task of taking everybody through high school; and soon every high school graduate will expect to go through college. Our population grows, our birth rate shoots up, our prosperity continues. It is all very gratifying socially and very perilous educationally. But the job has to be done somehow.

Yet an analogy would suggest that quality is not negligible. For if the combined armies of Bonaparte and Wellington at Waterloo were confronted by a single modern division supported by a few tanks and planes, they would be massacred before they could get in range to inflict real damage on their numerically insignificant opponents. To drill millions of youngsters in handling muskets and sabres as preparation for rocket warfare would solve only the problem of keeping millions of youngsters busy. And youngsters are quick to learn—and actively resent—that they are merely being kept busy.

The analogy, of course, is partly misleading. A modern division is the apex of an enormous industrial pyramid, and it is possible that real quality in education is only the fortunate peak of a vast pile of dreary teaching and wasted learning. We do not seem to know whether quality is compatible with quantity—but we shall have to find out in the next twenty years. In any case it is obvious that quantity without quality is useless and that good education, no matter how few it affects, is of prime importance to nation and world.

Furthermore, assuming the unlikely event that we can achieve some way of educating everybody effectively, that is, that all minds can be well trained and the best superbly trained, we may be no better off than now. If I may commit another analogy, suppose that (in Huxley's metaphor) our education consisted in mastery of the game of chess. We should teach everybody to attain proficiency in the game, and we should select, accelerate, and promote the sharpest, soundest, and most original players to be our Grand Masters. Should we then have, Q. E. D., a splendid educational system? Hardly. For though Huxley used chess metaphorically, to stand

for knowledge of the laws of nature, I have been using it literally. If we develop a splendid educational system devoted only to chess—or some other pleasant pastime—we shall fail even though we simultaneously achieve quantity and quality.

Quality in education involves the questions *quality of what* and *quality for whom*. We cannot lay down principles of achieving a good education for the few, and then seek to generalize them for the many, without asking what is to be taught. A thorough search for quality in education must include and perhaps begin with a study of the curriculum. In this study the opinions of all should be welcome—all, that is, except the curriculum experts, who as technical advisers should be forced to do as they are told, not allowed to set policy which they as neither teachers nor scholars have no right to set. Everyone knows what should go into the curriculum—history, science, literature and the arts, philosophy, mathematics, foreign languages, and physical education. But, since we can no longer aspire to teach everything, even in a sixteen-year program, in what order do we select and with what emphasis?

Even if we know what we are to teach the few, can we generalize it for the many? Is good teaching a business so expensive in time and talent that we must simply limit it to the economically favored and let the rest get along as they can with second-rate stuff? And is every child equipped to make use of a fine education—or must it be limited to the intellectually gifted? Merely to ask these questions is thought to be somehow disloyal to American educational tradition, but all of us inwardly know they must be asked and answered.

Lastly, we must realize that education is not only the emission of a product but also a process. It is a good thing if Mr. Ford's workers and technicians lead a full, rich life, but it has no necessary relation to the excellence of the car they produce. In education the subjective evaluation of the process is crucial. Quality in education demands not only that teachers and children be happy in their work—that they like each other, that they respect each other, that they "enjoy school." These are of course essential. But quality in education goes beyond the successful science and techniques that make a smooth-running car, or the social principles and statistical knowledge that produce an equitable income tax. Quality in education—good teaching and good learning—is an art, to be judged subjectively, in the last analysis, like all arts, and to be valued with the other arts as one of the highest experiences of which man is capable.

Mr. Brown is a member of the English Department at the Fieldston School and Chief Advisor of the junior and senior classes. He is the author of: *They See for Themselves*, a study in intercultural education; *Making Democracy Work in Your Community* (with Helen Trager); a volume of verse, *My Father's Business*; and many poems and critical essays published in *Commentary*, *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, the *Partisan Review*, etc.

An effective education must be based upon a thoughtful understanding of each child. In a school a psychiatrist, psychologist and social worker, as well as parents and teachers, may contribute to a basic appreciation of the special needs, the strengths and aptitudes of students. Free communication among all these people makes them better able to cooperate in the children's interests.

TEAM GUIDANCE—A DIMENSION OF EDUCATION

Louis Jay Gilbert, M.D.

The "Guidance Department" to which I refer in this article is one composed of some combination of social worker, psychologist and psychiatrist, all of whom operate within a school and in close teamwork with the educational staff. Though the contribution of the teacher-trained guidance person, such as the vocational or educational advisor, is unquestionably considerable and he is an important part of the teamwork, his precise operational role is not within the scope of this essay.

Only a few years ago, the use of guidance personnel was limited rather exclusively to handling either outstandingly disturbed children or severe delinquents. The presence of a consulting psychiatrist on the staff of a school for normal children still frequently labels the school as one enrolling a large percentage of "sick" children. Guidance, however, will become more a "dimension" of education, as those disciplines dealing with the genetic psychological aspects of human behavior become an increasingly integral part of the total school functioning. Those who have grown up with the process recall, without nostalgia, the impenetrable wall erected by the school to bar entrance to its sanctum sanctorum, the classroom. I remember the principal of a large junior high school who, after escorting the psychiatrist through the school, said with great pride, "Now you have seen how we work here. After this, when I refer a child don't make suggestions on what we can do, because we've already done everything. Just get him out of my school!"

The ingredient vitally necessary to the integration of disciplines, whatever they are, is free communication. In the case of guidance work and teaching, this has, until recently, been minimal. Instead, there has been a kind of rivalry: the educator feels that the clinician pretends to know all the answers when he really has little grasp of group and classroom problems; the clinician feels that the

educator is unenlightened, refusing really to "understand" the child as he feels he does exclusively. Each works sincerely for the child's benefit, but ironically both are so involved with their own conscious and unconscious attitudes that the youngster is not always the richer for their combined attentions.

An entirely different perspective on the relation between the two disciplines can perhaps best be presented in terms of the "field" theory. As Frank¹ describes it, "In field theory what we call 'parts' are not to be conceived of as separate, independently self-acting entities. The 'parts' are continually acting, reacting, interreacting, *transacting*, by a reciprocal circular process. . . . By their dynamic, circular activity the 'parts' create and maintain the 'whole' which reciprocally organizes and governs the activities of the 'parts' and thereby gives rise to that organized 'whole.'"

Instead of competing over which "understands" the child better, a clinically trained guidance staff may join with educators to blend their contributions, each retaining his own unique ability while reinforcing the other. This organization of teachers and clinical staff contributes to the total education of the child, not only through curriculum, but through the entire atmosphere or "field" of the school.

The function of a guidance department is two-fold: 1) To study children presenting problems and to help them by getting the school and parents to make environmental adaptations, or by more direct means either within the school or through outside sources. 2) To work with school personnel in every aspect of the educational program: admissions, staff recruitment and development, school-parent relationships, curriculum planning, personnel practices, interpersonal group problems in the classroom, public relations, problems of student government, social attitudes of the students.

But whereas the emphasis in this article has been on this, rather than the child-focussed, guidance function, there has been no intent to minimize the latter, about which a large amount of literature is already available. The child is the ultimate beneficiary of the complementary and integrative teamwork approach, in which guidance becomes a dimension of education.

Teachers and members of the guidance department exchange ideas not only about the individual children referred to the latter for attention but also about the school as a whole. The guidance worker is not a stranger in the classroom. He is a familiar enough sight to be "ignored" by the teacher and the class. He makes his obser-

¹ Frank, L. K., "Genetic Psychology and Its Prospects," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, Vol. 21, P. 506, 1951.

vations through passive or active participation, but never by intrusion. With younger children, he may enter into their play and be a participant observer; with the older, he is almost always just an observer. He is acceptable to the pupils in direct ratio to his acceptance by the school—in accordance with his ability to enter into the "field."

Some psychiatrists, social workers or psychologists have such a rigid clinical approach that they cannot wholly accept this role in the school environment. Frequently, when one is asked to observe a child in a classroom, one is able to pick up other problems or even to find a "focus of infection" of a group problem, exclusive of the child originally referred. Those who see the child as an isolated clinical entity may be effective when they deal directly with the child, but they cannot really enter into teamwork or objectively observe group relationships. Others may feel themselves a part of the "persecuted" minority of mental hygiene workers and are somewhat defensive or condescending so that the school personnel cannot get along with them.

Ideally, the guidance worker should enter into the life of the school as much as possible, considering the demands of other work. Having lunch with the children is an enriching experience and one gets a perspective on a child not possible from classroom observation alone. Other key areas are arrival and dismissal times when one can observe the younger children interacting not only with the school, but with the parent or maid. Attendance at selected functions, such as an occasional important athletic event or school play, not only gives the worker new insights into the older age groups, but makes him more acceptable to the students.

Pressure of time will limit the worker's participation in school life. However, though she may feel noble skipping the coffee hour or always eating lunch at her desk, she would probably accomplish more by being less of a martyr, for the kind of interchange that takes place between teacher and worker over coffee can be very fruitful.

Case discussions and seminars or work shops which give teachers an opportunity to discuss school problems are especially useful to the school staff. For example, when several high school students who have never faced the probable results of their poor work become concerned about graduation, the school decides to re-examine its policies in regard to promotion. As it does so, several questions arise. Does the school consider itself strictly an academic high school? Are youngsters allowed to move on year after year without being encouraged to face the ultimate result of their low marks?

If so, at which points (in a school with classes ranging from preschool through high school) does the child profit most by being gradually confronted with the realities of his situation. Can any such generalizations be made? What role does the family play? How is it best to work with them? Neither the social worker, psychologist nor psychiatrist can answer these questions with certainty any more than can the educator, but by using an interdisciplinary approach, they can arrive at some decisions. They may feel that some research is necessary, that the elementary school histories of those children who did poorly in high school should be studied, in an effort to discover indicators which could have foretold the failure with some degree of accuracy. These indicators might include not only the IQ and achievement scores, but family attitudes toward acceptance of such findings, the child's ability to use fully what resources he does have, the other assets he may have which can be drawn on to raise his self esteem and improve his total functioning. The evaluation, integration and use of this data is dependent on the teamwork relationship of the various disciplines operative in the school.

Dr. Gilbert, Psychiatric Consultant to the Ethical Culture Schools, has served with many organizations including the New York City Youth Board, the Bureau of Child Guidance and the Jewish Board of Guardians. He is on the faculty of the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry and is a Fellow of the Academy of Psychoanalysis and of the American Orthopsychiatric Association.

**THE ETHICAL CULTURE SCHOOLS OF
NEW YORK CITY ARE:**

The Fieldston School (high school)

Fieldston Lower School

The Midtown Ethical Culture School

Never have so many people received so much education as in America today. And yet we are disappointed in the behavior of our citizens, especially where moral issues are involved. Education has failed indeed if we cannot produce decent human beings as well as informed students.

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES

Dr. Henry Neumann

When people add the word "spiritual" to the values they want schools to develop, they have good reason. They wish children to begin acquiring morals early, yes. But only "morals?" Somehow the word has its unlovely overtones. It suggests Mark Twain's "Be good and you will be lonesome." Even where it does not imply being a kill-joy, it may mean thinking or acting out of fear of a policeman or of disapproving neighbors; or performing mechanically, without heart, compassion, understanding, or concern for true justice.

Though "spiritual" too can have its undesirable flavors, it speaks nevertheless of attitudes much more affirmative, much warmer in the sense of coming out of deep and fine aspirations. At the very least it betokens a more reflective way of regarding conduct than "moral" does, a genuine feeling for basic decencies, a sincere response to the call of high ideals, firmly cherished, and earnestly and often pondered. Though to some persons, "spiritual" may suggest "effeminate" or "too good for this world," today's frequent use of the term by men neither womanish nor otherworldy reminds us how important indeed is this educational emphasais.

Serious as delinquency in the young can be, much more is needed than saving them from wrongdoing. Nothing so drives out the poorer ambitions as a genuine feeling for the better ones. And far more common than crime is ethical mediocrity, which leaves people, as Mary Webb said, "not bad but empty of good." How can schools help to cultivate a finer grain to their pupils' lives, growth in sensible, responsible, considerate self-direction in a world where living with other people will always call for this major need? Certainly no one approach to instruction, training or inspiration within the school can be expected to do this, nor even the life of the school as a whole, without help from the home and other influences for spiritual growth. But some gleanings from the experience of the schools which this writer knows best may be of use to other teachers.

Stories which capture the imagination of young people are an excellent medium for helping them to clarify their values. Through discussions based on tales that appeal to their natural sympathies,

hero worship, and concern for justice they are encouraged to form habits of moral reflection, to look at conduct over long range, to understand as clearly as they can what issues are involved in the choices which free people are expected to make with their eyes open. This medium can be employed by teachers of almost any subject in almost any school, with material adapted to different age levels.

One example of the sort of stories which we have found helpful is that of Colonel Roebling, the engineer responsible for building the Brooklyn Bridge some 80 years ago, who discovered that one of the contractors had supplied cables which came short of the required number of wires for each strand. He thereupon ordered a whole year's work to be ripped out and any questionable cable replaced by a dependable one. Various instances were mentioned of how and why we trust people. For example, children trust their own parents. We also trust doctors, druggists, the engineer on the train, the airplane pilot. Father deposits money in his bank and pays for insurance with confidence that the people handling his money are trustworthy. The discussion also brought out the fact that cheating poisons the atmosphere of mutual confidence needed for healthy living. Thus the children saw that we owe our happiness, our security, often our very lives, to the fact that there are people in the world who are utterly dependable.

Chances for increasing such ethical understanding lie at hand in teaching most, if not all, of the subjects already in the curriculum. For example, an English class which had enjoyed an essay by Charles Lamb was told by the teacher about the tender, patient care with which Lamb treated his sister Mary, who was mentally ill. The pupils were then asked to discuss why it is that sometimes people are better friends with outsiders than they are with their own brothers or sisters. This involved a discussion of why friendships are formed, why they break, what may be reasonably expected of a friend. History, too, can be highly fruitful for ethical guidance and exploration when it is used to distinguish what in our heritage needs most to be cherished and to be carried forward to still finer application.

Through various kinds of dramatic activities, which call on every possible resource for beauty in sound, speech, mass and color that the children can contribute, ethical concepts may be demonstrated in several different ways. Sharing and planning together develops responsibility in students, increases their appreciation of one another's talents, and reaffirms their faith in one another's honesty and fairness. The subject matter presented may also inspire a lesson in spiritual values. For example, in one of our Thanksgiving festivals, several classes presented episodes in the history of man's cultivation of

food. The closing scene showed food going to hungry neighbors here and abroad. In the classrooms the teachers talked over with their pupils the basic ethical principle that the best way to show thanks, and especially to our forebears, is to put their gifts to excellent use. A festival celebrating the history of light ended with scenes showing high moments in the spiritual history of the human race.

In schools situations often arise which test the maturity and ethical values of students and faculty alike. The way they measure up depends to a large extent on the way in which their understanding is enlisted as well as how the project fulfills their own sense of moral values. One of our schools once undertook a project to raise money for sending much-needed food to foreign countries. Every class discussed the part in the whole program for which it would make itself responsible. When teachers had to leave their pupils, class behavior did not suffer. The children understood clearly how the success of the project required each to restrain himself or others from taking advantage of the teacher's absence. Through this experience they learned the importance of accepting individual responsibility for one's special part in the big enterprise. Such sharing, to the fullest possible extent for each age in the collective life of the school—not merely in its "government," offers much to growth in the best of democratic relationships.

As in all teaching, much depends on the individual instructor, on his power to grasp opportunities, his understanding and appreciation for young minds, his personal contribution to the important role of mentor. The following description by one of our students of his ethics teacher might equally apply to thousands of other conscientious, imaginative teachers in schools all over the country: "When he came to our classes, he did not try to force anything into our heads; but he came and went like a quiet breeze, gently leaving a thought with us. It was not a set of rigid precepts, it was a way of life, a mural of experience, projected ahead, out of the wide past and into the expanding future. Each time he left, I had a feeling of a certain peace and a quiet self-confidence as well as a humility and a feeling of enthusiasm. I always looked forward to his talking about the Greeks, or the Romans, or the Jews, and other people, about what life and history were, and what they could become for us if we retained our curiosity, our creative drive, our inner exuberance."

Leader of the Brooklyn Ethical Culture Society for 45 years, Dr. Neumann has taught English at the City College of N. Y. and ethics and English in the Ethical Culture Schools. He is the author of *Education for Moral Growth* and *Lives in the Making*.

The kind of self respect that presupposes respect for others also must be inherent in the policies of a good school.

THE EDUCATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY IN ENROLMENT

Sallie Sterling Rust

In 1948 when an amendment was proposed to the Education Law of the State of New York "in relation to the prevention and elimination of practices of discrimination in education because of race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry," the Registration Office of the Ethical Culture Schools was asked to make comments and suggest changes. In doing so we said that to us the whole idea behind the amendment seemed negative, restrictive, and punitive. We felt that the amendment should have been *for* something good, rather than *against* something bad, and that it should have been designed to help all schools to think about the implications of their existing procedures in admitting students and to improve these procedures.

In general, people tend to think and act on their highest ethical level when they are acting in and for schools. Board members, school officials, teachers and parents sincerely wish to make their schools as fine as possible. They consider education important, and they are willing to give a great deal of their time, strength and money towards improving it. Nevertheless school people do not sit down together often enough to re-examine carefully and impartially the purposes of their schools and the type of student body which would best enable them to carry out these purposes. Therefore we suggested that if the proposed amendment could not be wholly re-written, it might at least contain the following clause: "An educational institution shall describe publicly and in detail the character of student body which it believes necessary to maintain in order to accomplish its peculiar educational purpose and shall explain briefly the reasons for this belief, together with a brief account of the general procedures followed in determining admission of students. This statement shall be printed in whatever pamphlets, booklets, or catalogues are offered to prospective students and shall also be incorporated in the institution's annual report to the State Department of Education."

Our proposed clause was not inserted, but it still seems to us to indicate the best general base for attacking the problem of divers-

ifying the student bodies of both public and private schools. It is the pupils and the teachers in any given school who carry out the work of that school and they should be consciously chosen for this function.

If after honest research a school board should decide that the educational aims of its school could best be realized by enrolling only children of a certain economic class or residential area or from families of certain occupational or cultural groups, *and if the board members were willing to publish their findings*, all applicants for admission would know exactly what sort of school it was and what kind of pupils it wanted. Then, in the long run, the light and force of publicity would greatly reduce the number of schools which persisted in unjustifiably restrictive attitudes towards enrolment. In most instances, however, we like to think that once a group of school administrators and teachers sat down and asked themselves "What kinds of children can we best educate in our school in order to accomplish what we regard as the highest and most useful ends of education and how can we go about enrolling such a group of children?" they would soon find that they both need and want a diversified student body. The greater variety of family backgrounds and personal experiences among the pupils and teachers, the more meaningful will be the lessons in all academic areas. The teachers' task of interpretation will also be easier, not in the sense that teachers will have less work to do but because of the many roads which will open up before them along which to guide their children's thoughts and activities.

Diversity of pupils, economically, racially and in other respects, will not, however, in itself furnish a workable tool for education. To be manageable, this diversity must not confront the teachers of a given school with children who are incapable of learning together in the setting of that school. Each school must decide for itself what physical disabilities, emotional instabilities, or mental deficiencies will prevent a child's fitting happily into its program. Even in these areas, however, the school authorities ought to guard against falling into a fixed pattern and ought to set up some machinery for periodic reviews of policy. Improved techniques in certain academic fields may make it possible to enrol children who formerly could not be educated in the school; remedial work, the expansion of a guidance program, the building of a new room or new equipment may each be the means of broadening the base of an admissions program.

A technically manageable class representing many differences in the children and in their family backgrounds may, nevertheless, be

unable to experience the finest kind of group life and educational growth if its diversity is not an integral part of a larger unity, a spiritual and philosophical unity reflecting the educational ideas and ideals of parents, teachers and administrators. The fact that a dark-skinned child sits next to a light-skinned one or that the factory president's child sits next to the elevator operator's or the Presbyterian next to the Buddhist, will not guarantee a real sharing of work and play. Such contiguity may, unfortunately, only exaggerate differences, develop jealousies and enmities, and establish prejudices. Only in a school where the parents and teachers take differences of all sorts for granted and yet also welcome them as interesting and exciting will the children be able to grow up together naturally and freely.

There is, therefore, a limit to which the diversity of a student body can be developed, namely the limits of the common educational interests of the parents and teachers. Parents may differ in language, color, occupation or formal education but they must at least respect each other as co-workers in the bringing up of children. They must also be convinced of the advantages of group diversity for themselves as well as for their children.

This may seem to take for granted a power to choose which no school really possesses. The private school people will say that their choice of pupils is limited by those who apply for admission and by such financial considerations as budgets, endowments, or economic depressions. The public school people will say that they just don't choose: they must take students as they come. But despite these very real limitations it is possible to keep as an ideal the grouping together of as many kinds of children and teachers as can be functionally united. To the extent that schools have already achieved this, the results have been wonderfully rewarding. For all children a diversity of social experience is an essential of which they should not be deprived.

Private schools might do well to re-examine their purposes and to consider how greater diversity among pupils and faculty would contribute to these purposes. The problem should be handled by board members, principals, teachers and parents working together, so that admissions policies may be openly arrived at, clearly understood and definitely enunciated. If all concerned undertake this task with a view to formulating policies which the school is willing to make public and to carry out, they will at least reach an accurate definition of their educational philosophy. At best, they may decide that they really want their school to be one in which there is a con-

scious effort to diversify the student body in the interests of educational experience.

Public schools really have a freer hand than they think, provided they are willing to get together and consider the possibilities of adopting new policies of pupil enrolment. They may find that improved transportation makes it no longer necessary to assign pupils to a school strictly according to their places of residence. In many cases, in order to achieve the positive educational factor of diversity, it may prove wiser to send children to a school which is not the one nearest to their homes.

There will always be differences in schools and in student bodies, but the differences should reflect the reasoned thinking of school authorities whose purposes are clear and clearly understood. The over-all objective on which enrolment is based in any school, public or private, should go beyond the question of segregation, de-segregation or even of integration. It should simply be to bring together as many kinds of children and teachers as possible for the happiest and most fruitful experience in learning to understand each other and to grow in knowledge of their world.

Miss Rust has been the Registrar of the Ethical Culture Schools since 1940. She taught Latin in their high school from 1923 to 1940.

Questions asked us by public schools in all parts of the country indicate a wide range of interest in educational problems. The following are typical examples from our recent correspondence.

"Can children be taught to reason? Is the ability to think clearly necessary, desirable, or possible in our present society where conformity presents an easier road to happiness?"

"What is the trend in regard to the development of the basic skills in education—the Three R's?"

"Are other learnings also basic to good education? If so, what are they?"

"What is, or should be, the trend in terms of the gifted and the limited student? Is it best to separate these groups? At what point should differentiations take place?"

"What experiments are you now conducting to develop better teaching and learning methods?"

Finally, one inquirer writes: "We are planning a new school in our community. What changes do you consider desirable in subject matter, in teaching methods, in teacher training, in school facilities, and in parental education?"

Questions like these make it clear that the modern independent school which is willing to share its experience can be of service to public education through research and demonstrations, through publications such as this one, through training programs, and by making its facilities and curriculum available to the community. Some of these ways of sharing experience are described in the following articles.

A PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK TRAINING

Rae A. Levine

Social work in schools has been in existence since 1906.* But in recent years there has been a tremendously increased demand for social workers trained specifically to work in a school setting. Literature in the field throughout the United States indicates that schools of social work are well aware of the need to provide this special training. As in other areas, learning must come from practical experience—in this case, that of the school.

The traditional pattern for educating social workers as members of a clinical team cannot satisfy school needs regardless of how many workers are trained. Professional workers engaged in helping disturbed children are few enough in relation to those in urgent

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need of help. Yet their load is increased because in concentrating on the small group of "problem" children we must inevitably neglect the healthy ones who make up most of the school population. As a result there is a constant accretion of problem cases which develop within this normal group. If we were to pay more attention to them in the first place, we could break this endless pattern by detecting some difficulties before they become serious, and by heading others off altogether.

The primary emphasis in school social work might be profitably shifted from a concern for the disturbed child to the prevention of disturbance in all children. Since it is more economical and more effective to keep children healthy than to cure them, it should be of greater value to reach the larger, normal population, even at the cost of spending less time with the individual problem child.

A school is a child's second home, and it is there that many potential difficulties may be detected and prevented, thus improving home relationships as well as outside social contacts. In the field of social welfare and education, prevention should form the cornerstone of a workable and rewarding training program. The school should be the nursery which develops active, happy social beings.

An important educational objective is to help the child gradually to assume responsibilities towards other people as an approach to thoughtful citizenship. This objective presumes that he must understand the world in which he lives, must understand and appreciate his own intellectual, emotional, social and physical equipment. He can then become a self-motivating person, sharing in the design of his educational experience and moving towards his goal in constructive ways. To achieve this goal a school must be a social institution, concerned not only with teaching subject matter but also with the all-important task of developing a sound human being, capable of learning.

Implicit in this concept is the necessity to prevent problems which impair or destroy the constructive use of education. This is a challenging task for school and teacher. Is it not possible that this area of prevention might be a fruitful one for graduate social work training? It seems likely that principles underlying the theory and practice of social work might be adapted to the requirements of education as they have been to the special needs of the armed forces, industry, rehabilitation, and other fields.

The following are some of the special conditions and opportunities which characterize an educational setting and help to determine the kind of content necessary in a training course designed to fit social workers to function successfully in a school:

1. By and large the school's population is normal and healthy.

This calls for a body of knowledge about health to be presented in courses on the normal growth and development of children as these relate to learning and adjustment. Within this normal range it is important to consider individual differences among children. With this perspective on health, even the so-called "disturbed" child may be helped within the school setting. In short, we need to adopt a diagnostic frame of reference based on a knowledge of what constitutes health as well as pathology.

2. In school the teacher is concerned with the group, and with the individual always as he affects the group and is affected by the group. To help an individual in this group situation the case worker must reorient his approach in somewhat the same way that group workers adapt generic principles to a group setting.

3. The function of the school is to educate. Hence principles and objectives need to be defined, limits established and methods adapted to case work practice in a school.

4. Guidance in a school is diversified, spread among teachers and other school personnel, with the teacher as the central figure. It is similar in many ways to social work, for sound education does not depend on intellectual capacity and receptivity alone. The parent is also a strategic member of the guidance team.

In this situation case work can make an important contribution, through the extent and quality of insight into human behavior which it provides. This insight, and the knowledge of how to apply it, is an extension of the teacher's because her professional training and that of the social worker are different.

Case work supports and supplements the educator's contribution. A training course must therefore contain material on methods and techniques to assist the teacher and the school to deal directly with children's problems and to offer help to parents. This should include information about curriculum planning, classroom problems and teacher management of them, the teacher's perspectives, techniques and goals, discipline in school: in short, a comprehensive survey of the school and its facilities, and their influence upon the educational progress of the child.

Case work is of course only one of many resources which a school may use to carry out educational objectives. This technique can succeed only to the extent that it can mesh its contribution with that of others in the school. If a child is not to be torn in different directions the people with whom he comes in contact must be in essential agreement about his education. The clinical team of which the social worker is a member is responsible together with the school administration for achieving harmonious cooperation. The training course must there-

fore deal with the social worker's role in inter-professional collaboration and with methods by which it may be attained. Problems of communication, verbal and written, need to be considered so that the clinical and case work program may be made comprehensible to other members of the school community.

5. In order to preserve the health of the school population, teachers and parents seek and need help in finding ways of preventing problems.

The training course should include techniques of conducting seminars on what constitutes normal development, behavior, learning and health. Individual differences would be discussed within the broader context of health, to avoid the feeling of threat or stigma associated with a problem situation.

Teachers should not feel threatened, or that their authority is being usurped, as sometimes occurs when the discussion centers on a child who is already in trouble. They can pool the knowledge they gain from these seminars for the benefit of all the children. They are helped to spot problem situations early and to prevent them by taking steps in time.

Parents, too, respond more readily when they are not threatened by a problem because of being directly involved in it. They should be approached on a positive basis—the need to preserve mental health. We need to find out together what goes into doing a good job. Parents can thus be alerted to the need and possibility of preventing problems. They will respond warmly to the realization that one child's health is related to the health of all children, and that parents can make a positive, significant contribution.

Parent education is available outside the school in such organizations as child-study groups. But how many parents who need it most attend? It is possible that they would be drawn more readily if this education were made available by the school their children attend, thus closing the gap between the home and the school, and meshing all disciplines in consistent and concerted effort towards achieving educational goals.

Miss Levine is Coordinator of Guidance Services in the Ethical Culture Schools, which are now engaged in planning a training program in conjunction with the New York School of Social Work, Columbia University.

TWELVE MONTHS' USE OF SCHOOL RESOURCES

Kendall T. Bassett

In most large American cities so little physical space is available for community use that the facilities of every school should be pressed into service wherever possible. All over the country this need is felt, and is often met by planning new school buildings to double as community centers. However, in many areas like the Riverdale section of New York City, where the Fieldston School is located, rapid population growth has outpaced the development of community resources.

Moreover, since we have never believed that an independent school should be just a collection of buildings behind a stone wall, we have consciously sought to merge the life of our school with that of our neighbors, to our mutual advantage. The Fieldston School (high school and junior high school) and the Fieldston Lower School (nursery and elementary) comprise eleven buildings located on sixteen wooded acres in the heart of a thickly settled residential district. Throughout the year we make our facilities available to the community whenever we can without curtailing our own use of them. For example, several religious groups have used some part of our plant on weekday evenings and Sundays.

For some years the Fieldston School has been occupied during six weeks of the summer by the Encampment for Citizenship, sponsored by the New York Society for Ethical Culture, which brings some 150 young people eighteen to twenty-three years old from all over the United States and from many backgrounds, racial, religious, vocational and sectional. Here they study the operation of American democratic processes in a setting which also provides for recreation and social activity. Our dining room, kitchen, libraries, gymnasium, swimming pool, tennis courts, and playing fields are all used to the full. Some members of our faculty are among those who lead discussion groups and workshops, and the educational director is a Leader of the Ethical Culture Society and head of the Ethics Department in our schools.

Student volunteers at Fieldston help to effect the annual change from day school to boarding camp, storing desks and chairs and setting up beds in classroom-dormitories. Our Riverdale neighbors are invited to attend many of the outstanding lectures and interesting programs which the Encampment presents.

Our faculty, however, has been eager to find ways of using our resources still more fully. So in the past two years we have set up

two new community enterprises. The Fieldston School Arts Center, open to the public on a nonprofit basis, utilizes the school facilities through the fall and winter. The Lower School and its grounds have become the site of a summer day camp for children, under the direction of its Principal. Our plan for this camp was approved by representatives of the Riverdale community, and most of the children it serves live in Riverdale or adjacent neighborhoods.

The program is adapted to the different age groups, from four to fourteen. Camping experience is introduced gradually: fours and fives progress from picnics on the school grounds to ferry rides across the Hudson; sevens and eights enjoy sleeping on the campus under the stars, after cooking their own supper; older children go on overnight trips. Similar arrangements could be made for any group of city children.

Our art room, science laboratory and well-equipped workshop offer refuge from the city's heat. But it is not for this reason that we consider these areas important. Indeed, we should not be at all content to make available our physical facilities and equipment alone. We believe that our educational philosophy and standards, developed through more than seventy-five years' experience, are even more valuable assets, which we also wish to share.

It has been interesting to note, for example, how the campers respond to various learning experiences which are a distinctive feature of our program. The achievement level of many children has been raised and their satisfaction correspondingly increased by their work in art, science and shop. Our museum of live animals has introduced inquiring youngsters to the wonder, charm and unique characters of living creatures. A goat which the campers adopted last year proved a center for many kinds of interests and learning.

We are also sharing our educational experience through our Arts Center. Organized two years ago by a group of school parents, faculty members and Riverdale neighbors, it offers courses for adults in painting, choral singing, dance, drama, literature, astronomy, and wood-working, on two weekday evenings. Saturday morning classes for children include art, dance, drama and shop. The Center also brings to the community without charge special cultural events like concerts and art exhibits, and its program includes a monthly series of unusual movies.

For thirty-four summers our schools have sponsored a summer camp near Cooperstown, N. Y., for boys and girls eight to fourteen years old. Staffed largely by our graduates and members of our faculty, the camp offers a program of informal sports and creative activities. A large garden, a farm animal program and special work

in forestry and conservation are distinctive features. An unusual project for the oldest campers is a study of a nearby community. With a background of research at the Farmers' Museum in Cooperstown, boys and girls visit farms, do chores, get to know country people—all richly rewarding for city children to whom it is unfamiliar.

These are the various ways in which the Ethical Culture Schools are putting to work not only their facilities but also wherever possible their experience as educators, during twelve months of the year, seven days a week.

Purely from a practical point of view, projects like these provide congenial after-hours and summer employment for many teachers. Fuller use of school facilities, even on a nonprofit basis, helps to solve a little of the financial problem that besets independent schools today, and would also ease the taxpayer's load, by spreading maintenance costs over a wide area. Actual maintenance work, of course, must be carefully planned. At Fieldston a paint crew works on a night shift the year round; much work is done during vacations within the school year.

But apart from these practical considerations, any good school, public or private, can take satisfaction in enriching the life of a larger community in the way for which it is best fitted. Our program is merely an example of what may be done by a school whose board of governors and administration is responsive to community needs. Each school has its own characteristic contribution to make. None can, or should, compete with the services of a settlement house, of churches or other organizations. But what a school, as a school, has to offer is of unique importance.

Mr. Bassett, who has taught at the Fieldston School for twenty-six years, is Chief Advisor for grades 7 and 8, and Director of the Fieldston School Arts Center.

THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL AS A CENTER FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Harry Heller

Any discussion of how the independent school may favorably affect the quality of American public education particularly through the training of teachers, implies questions that touch not only the competence of the independent school to do this but also the relationships between private and public education. Common tasks undertaken together frequently serve in themselves to clarify and strengthen common purposes, but understanding and good will condition common efforts in advance. We can perhaps approach the first question through a summary discussion of the second.

Democracy has its bigots. But relatively few Americans today will believe that the independent school presents a "clear and present danger" to our democratic institutions. Earnest doubters of private education are found here and there within the independent schools themselves. Prompted by some vague unease of conscience, they question the right of an independent school to exist in a democratic society, or wish their own school to be more democratic than the general democracy outside, which it often is. But these appear to be fewer than in the thirties and forties when democracy seemed to be at the crossroads, threatened by economic disaster and war. We still have our zealous traditionalists and confused progressives, we still have our educational quarrels, but the terms of debate have changed significantly.

Both the drama of desegregation and the urgency of providing more schools and more teachers underscore today the unrealism of earlier debates and the futility of false issues raised even by the well-intentioned. Indeed, even the true issues may lead us into new errors as the need to forestall conflict and to expand our educational plant distracts us from an equally essential consideration of the nature of learning and the quality of our schools. The problems are so great that we may be content with merely legal correctives or statistical solutions posing as true remedies. The danger is that we may forget that only more *good* schools will in the long run make possible more schools *and* good schools.

Few will deny that a private school can be a bad school and a public school a good school, as well as vice versa. The relatively few who would still maintain that the independent school is necessarily undemocratic, hence bad, fail to persuade their fellow Americans.

We are trying to send our children to private schools in larger numbers than can be accommodated. But misconceptions about independent schools persist. Chief among these is the belief that since the majority of students accepted are those who can pay large tuition fees, they must be rich schools. That this belief is far from the truth is becoming better known and must become still more widely recognized if the independent school is to play any considerable part in the improvement of American education. Small and improvised classrooms are not uncommon in private schools and sometimes offer an instructive contrast to the opulent architecture of suburban public schools. With rare exceptions, the independent school that does its job at all well contends with an annual budgetary deficit. Tuitions increase more slowly than the costs of educational materials, services and improvements, which sometimes must be curtailed or postponed. By contrast the public resources of many American communities seem unlimited. A scrupulous investigation of most independent schools would reveal very little economic waste in terms of the end product. When we shall have realized that good education is never a luxury and that only poor education is costly, when Americans buy good schooling as eagerly as they buy automobiles, it will become clear that only generous public allocations to education can suffice and that the budgets of most independent schools have been modest indeed.

We must grant, then, that the material conditions of the independent school, while admittedly superior to what is found in mediocre public schools, do not qualify it peculiarly to make a contribution to the betterment of education by serving as a training ground for teachers. What, then, are the essential characteristics of those independent schools that have endured and won the respect of those they serve and of the educational community, which fit them for such a task in the public service? Small classes are often claimed to be the chief advantage of private schools. Smallness does not automatically assure quality. Moreover, general prosperity seems to add to class size in private schools while their financial difficulties encourage the same trend. In any event the teachers we train must look forward for some time yet to teaching classes that are larger than ideal. After examining many other claimed—and real—advantages in detail, e.g., special guidance services, remedial classes, provision for the gifted, extra-curricular opportunities, etc., we come sooner or later to the fact, both simple and complex, that the strength of the independent school lies chiefly in its independence. It is true, as has often been said, that the independent school is relatively free from public controls, restraints, and the abuses of even a benevolent political adminis-

tration. The independent school is free to experiment with possibly better ways of educating the young. But freedom does not automatically assure its own good use. How have the independent schools used their freedom? What characteristics, by and large, fit them especially to serve as laboratory and demonstration schools, inducting teachers into the theory and practice of good teaching in both public and private schools? Many independent schools have long had their apprentices, student teachers, and internes. What does the independent school offer that would justify, in our present need for more and better teachers, the very rapid extension of these existing programs in cooperation with teacher-training institutions, liberal arts colleges and public education authorities?

Three characteristics of the good established independent school seem to recommend it particularly at this time for an important role in teacher training. First, the good independent school has a *philosophy of education*. Democratic ideology is still evolving and is already too vast and complex to be easily understood or communicated. Indeed it is best known in its misinterpretations and most widely practiced in its misapplications. Its subtleties escape harassed educators planning new curricula for an expanding and heterogeneous school population perhaps as often as they escape the politicians. Teachers need a specific democratic philosophy of education to stimulate, direct and test their professional thinking and activities and to enlist their supreme loyalties as persons and citizens. Good public schools have their philosophies too but they may lack continuity and consistency and must be understandably on their guard against offending community beliefs or even prejudices.

Philosophies may appear to vary widely from one good independent school to another. Sometimes the school seeks to embody the ethical principles of a parent religious group without being exclusive or sectarian. Sometimes it bases itself upon a more general humanism, system of guidance, or pedagogic method. Usually all these aspects are present in some form to give particular emphasis to the school's respect for the individual child and his many possibilities. This respect extends in principle—and often in practice!—to the teacher and parent. These philosophies do not pretend to be literal descriptions of what occurs in the school but are statements of intention and dedication. Experience with such a unifying philosophy of education at work from day to day in the many-sided lives of many individuals, even if it is ultimately modified or rejected, is surely as valuable to the participating novice teacher as any techniques of pedagogy. It relates theory and practice, enriching both in more significant ways than are commonly achieved in meeting "practice teaching" requirements.

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We must grant, then, that the material conditions of the independent school, while admittedly superior to what is found in mediocre public schools, do not qualify it peculiarly to make a contribution to the betterment of education by serving as a training ground for teachers. What, then, are the essential characteristics of those independent schools that have endured and won the respect of those they serve and of the educational community, which fit them for such a task in the public service? Small classes are often claimed to be the chief advantage of private schools. Smallness does not automatically assure quality. Moreover, general prosperity seems to add to class size in private schools while their financial difficulties encourage the same trend. In any event the teachers we train must look forward for some time yet to teaching classes that are larger than ideal. After examining many other claimed—and real—advantages in detail, e.g., special guidance services, remedial classes, provision for the gifted, extra-curricular opportunities, etc., we come sooner or later to the fact, both simple and complex, that the strength of the independent school lies chiefly in its independence. It is true, as has often been said, that the independent school is relatively free from public controls, restraints, and the abuses of even a benevolent political adminis-

tration. The independent school is free to experiment with possibly better ways of educating the young. But freedom does not automatically assure its own good use. How have the independent schools used their freedom? What characteristics, by and large, fit them especially to serve as laboratory and demonstration schools, inducting teachers into the theory and practice of good teaching in both public and private schools? Many independent schools have long had their apprentices, student teachers, and internes. What does the independent school offer that would justify, in our present need for more and better teachers, the very rapid extension of these existing programs in cooperation with teacher-training institutions, liberal arts colleges and public education authorities?

Three characteristics of the good established independent school seem to recommend it particularly at this time for an important role in teacher training. First, the good independent school has a *philosophy of education*. Democratic ideology is still evolving and is already too vast and complex to be easily understood or communicated. Indeed it is best known in its misinterpretations and most widely practiced in its misapplications. Its subtleties escape harassed educators planning new curricula for an expanding and heterogeneous school population perhaps as often as they escape the politicians. Teachers need a specific democratic philosophy of education to stimulate, direct and test their professional thinking and activities and to enlist their supreme loyalties as persons and citizens. Good public schools have their philosophies too but they may lack continuity and consistency and must be understandably on their guard against offending community beliefs or even prejudices.

Philosophies may appear to vary widely from one good independent school to another. Sometimes the school seeks to embody the ethical principles of a parent religious group without being exclusive or sectarian. Sometimes it bases itself upon a more general humanism, system of guidance, or pedagogic method. Usually all these aspects are present in some form to give particular emphasis to the school's respect for the individual child and his many possibilities. This respect extends in principle—and often in practice!—to the teacher and parent. These philosophies do not pretend to be literal descriptions of what occurs in the school but are statements of intention and dedication. Experience with such a unifying philosophy of education at work from day to day in the many-sided lives of many individuals, even if it is ultimately modified or rejected, is surely as valuable to the participating novice teacher as any techniques of pedagogy. It relates theory and practice, enriching both in more significant ways than are commonly achieved in meeting "practice teaching" requirements.

The remaining two characteristics of the good independent school that recommend its use as a public center for the training of teachers derive from the above and are related to each other: The greater freedom to teach and to learn encouraged by the independent school, and the high value attached by parents, students, and teachers alike to education, scholarship, ideas, intellectual discipline, hard work, and rounded development. A child acquires what he learns rather than what he is taught. What he *becomes* as a result of his schooling is more telling and enduring than what he acquires. What the teacher represents for the child is the key to this most complex and sensitive living process. The teacher cannot be merely a purveyor of knowledge. Like an artist, he must use and be used by his materials and his art in ways that are uniquely consistent with his nature. What the *teacher* becomes through his teaching is also supremely important. Only free teachers can be truly good teachers. The contagion of good teaching can be observed in a single school, and by extension good teachers can multiply good teachers throughout the country. Similarly, the respect of the "consumer," parent and child, for the teacher and his calling can raise the status of the American teacher immeasurably, a development that must be encouraged in many ways if we are to produce more and better teachers. These are the characteristics of the good independent school that make for quality in education wherever it is found. Contrary to a certain law of economics, good education *can* drive out bad education. Our prosperous economy threatens to glut itself with motor cars and television sets and must soon begin buying the spiritual commodities of life if only to maintain its high level of production.

If the good independent school achieves quality in education, how may it share this value with the public schools? There are many ways to effect this exchange through existing organizations or new groups which will cross public and private school lines in a common quest for better schooling for all. Maturing American education will not think it important to ask: Is it a public school or a private school? We shall ask instead: Is it a good school? And we shall recognize a good school primarily by the evidence that it is becoming a better school. For his part, the private school teacher will see his contribution to public education as an act of solidarity that furthers his own growth. In this transmission of quality from school to school, a fine and expanding program of teacher training in the independent schools of the country can serve as one of the most essential links.

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